

Amendments To The Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown.

1 – 2 (canceled)

3. (new) A method for controlling a process flow, comprising:

determining a plurality of ideal characteristic variables for the process flow that describe a sub-aspect of the process flow and define a desired target for each sub-aspect;

determining actual characteristic variables of the sub-aspects of the process flow at an observation time point and the actual state of the process flow in the observation time period is described by the actual characteristic variables;

determining a plurality of deviations of the actual characteristic variables from the corresponding ideal characteristic variables with the changes over time of the actual characteristic variables being included; and

representing the ideal characteristic variables as an optimum point in a center area of a display field of a visualization system and the actual characteristic variables are shown as an actual point at a distance from the optimum point and the actual points are graphically connected by connecting lines so that the area enclosed by the connecting lines is a measure of the quality of the process flow in the observation time period.

4. (new) A device for controlling a process flow by a data processing system, comprising:

an electronic storage area where a plurality of ideal characteristic variables that describe a sub-aspect of the process flow can be stored and a desired target process flow is defined by the ideal characteristic variables;

a calculation module that determines the actual characteristic variables of the sub-aspects of the process flow in an observation time period during the process flow and an actual state of the process flow in the observation time period is described by the actual characteristic variables and the deviations of the actual characteristic variables from the corresponding ideal characteristic variables; and

a visualization system that represents the ideal characteristic variables as an optimum point in a central area of a display field of the visualization system and the actual characteristic variables are represented as an actual point at a distance from the optimum point such that the relation to the deviation of the corresponding actual characteristic variable from the corresponding ideal characteristic variable are represented as actual points being graphically connected by connecting lines to create an area enclosed by the connecting lines is a measure of the quality of the process flow in the observation time period.